

I think this is really the objective we must pursue with a coordinated and concerted action. That is, what has been developed over the world—in the world of markets, which have moved away from reality, should not affect the reality of economies. And the concerted and common action between the United States and Europe will certainly have chances to make the real economy—to prevent real economy from being affected by what has happened all over the world in the financial markets.

So we will continue to work together. President Bush has also expressed the intention to have a meeting among the leaders in—within the G-8 in the next few weeks. I absolutely agree with him. I think that everything which can be done for a coordinated action, just to pursue a common method and behave in the same way versus this global crisis, is something which is positive.

I would like to close my statement by telling President Bush—and expressing my appreciation, my friendship, my congratulations, and my love and esteem. I've been working with him very well. There has never been a moment when I saw in him interests which are not general interest. I never saw biased interest. There has never been a moment when I saw in him something different from a very sincere and pure feelings and sentiment.

He is a person—he is a man of vision. He is an idealist. And also he has the courage of implementing what he believes is right, what he thinks needs to be done to pursue the ideals which he considers to be right for himself, his people, and the world. The United States has taken over the responsibility of taking care of the world.

I would like to express special thanks to President Bush and to his people for what America and United States have been doing over these years. And not only did they save us, save Europe from communism, nazism many years ago, but it—also, the United States has helped us to achieve welfare, wealth, and well-being. They were next to us over the cold war years. Every time that wounds opened in the world, the United States sent its troops, paying a very high price in terms of human lives, to guarantee free-

dom not only the United States but the rest of the world as well.

And I think we—all European citizens must be grateful to the United States for this. We must be grateful to the American people. We must bow in front of the sacrifices and the sacrifices of so many lives. And we have to state and say that never, ever—the U.S. troops continued to stay in countries where they had intervened to help people save their lives, so they did never stay there to occupy out of interest. And this has to be remembered by all Europeans.

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for being here. And believe me, believe me that my feelings are shared by the great majority of Italians and European citizens as well.

Thank you very much. Thank you again.  
**President Bush.** Thank you. Good job.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. Prime Minister Berlusconi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

### Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy

*October 13, 2008*

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Vice President, Mrs. Cheney, Madam Speaker, Members of Congress, Justices of the Supreme Court, members of my Cabinet, honored guests: Laura and I are so pleased to welcome you to the White House.

Every year on Columbus Day, we remember the remarkable history that unites America and Italy. That history began more than five centuries ago when an Italian explorer sighted land after a long ocean voyage. Many believed Christopher Columbus had reached the Far East, but another Italian explorer helped show otherwise. Amerigo Vespucci's journeys revealed that the land was a new world. And America will always be proud to carry his name.

Through the years, generations of Italian immigrants have made their own voyage to the New World. They brought with them a vibrant culture and a strong sense of family. And today, their children and grandchildren have risen to some of the highest offices in

our land. Among our guests tonight is the first Italian American Speaker of the House, and first woman, Nancy Pelosi. And we're also honored to be joined by the first Italian American Justices of the United States Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito.

The ties between the people of America and the people of Italy run deep, and the friendship between our countries has never been stronger. The United States and Italy are standing together against the forces of tyranny and terror. We're partnering to meet the challenges in our economies and expand trade and prosperity. And we share a vision of a future of freedom and hope for all the people.

Mr. Prime Minister, you're a strong leader. I admire your enterprising spirit, your visionary leadership, and your commitment to your word. I've enjoyed serving with you on the world stage. I'm honored to call you a close friend.

And it is now my privilege to offer a toast to the Prime Minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:06 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Berlusconi.

### **Proclamation 8307—White Cane Safety Day, 2008**

*October 13, 2008*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Compassion is one of our Nation's defining values, and we must work to ensure that all Americans are able to participate fully in society. The white cane allows many of our citizens who are blind or visually impaired to enjoy increased mobility. On White Cane Safety Day, we celebrate the symbolism of the white cane and highlight the importance of ensuring that individuals who are blind or visually impaired can live independently and realize their full potential.

Through the New Freedom Initiative, my Administration has put into action our strong commitment to helping more individuals with disabilities participate in all aspects of life. Since 2001, this initiative has built on the progress of the Americans with Disabilities Act and helped create greater access to schools, the workplace, and community life. These efforts are helping to remove barriers and enabling more Americans to live with greater dignity and freedom.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved on October 6, 1964 (Public Law 88–628), as amended, has designated October 15 of each year as “White Cane Safety Day.”

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2008, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, business leaders, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 1:15 p.m., October 15, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

### **Remarks on the National Economy**

*October 14, 2008*

Good morning. I just completed a meeting with my Working Group on Financial Markets. We discussed the unprecedented and aggressive steps the Federal Government is taking to address the financial crisis. Over the past few weeks, my administration has worked with both parties in Congress to pass a financial rescue plan. Federal agencies have moved decisively to shore up struggling institutions and stabilize our markets, and the United States has worked with partners